

# Urban Affairs Association Conference

San Francisco, April 3-6, 2013

## “Urban Regeneration and Sustainability”

Anna-Lisa Müller<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Assistant Professor | Department of Geography

University of Bremen | P.O. Box 330 440 | D-28334 Bremen | Germany

phone: +49.176.646 341 88 | e-mail: [anna-lisa.mueller@uni-bremen.de](mailto:anna-lisa.mueller@uni-bremen.de)

## **"We want to have a creative sustainable city."<sup>1</sup> Using the Sustainability Paradigm to Revitalize the City of Dublin**

**Keywords:** urban planning, creative city, sustainability, revitalization, Dublin

**Abstract:** This paper argues that the sustainability paradigm is currently used to transform industrial port cities into creative sustainable cities (Müller, 2013). Based on empirical data from the city of Dublin, I show that the sustainability paradigm is combined with the creative city paradigm to

<sup>1</sup> This is a formulation expressed by a city official in an interview conducted by the author, Dublin 2008.

revitalize inner-city quarters. This urban planning strategy includes a focus on the creative class (Florida, 2004) and aims at integrating the old in the new, both in architectural and social terms. With this, it tries to be an integrative urban revitalization strategy.

In the course of the 20th century, the Irish society developed from an industrial to a postindustrial, knowledge-based society (Bell, 1973; Drucker, 1993). New occupations emerged, making new forms of working spaces and modes of transport necessary, and a growing population now asks for a new kind of living spaces. Additionally, inner-city quarters have become increasingly popular with people working in knowledge-intensive industries. Consequently, city planners have initiated a revitalization process in these quarters, and they used two urban planning paradigms – creative cities (Florida, 2005) and sustainability – as guidelines for urban regeneration.

This strategy aims to transform the whole city, but the single districts have to be the object of investigation when empirically approaching the changes of the built environment. Here we see that a threefold understanding of sustainability is used to integrate the demands of the new social groups in those of existing communities. Thus, the approaches used in the districts differ: (1) In *The Liberties*, home of a new-build technology cluster, the focus is on an economically sustainable development. (2) In *Temple Bar*, Dublin's cultural

quarter, the emphasis is on a socially sustainable approach. (3) In the *Docklands*, the area of the old inner-city harbor, an attempt is made to combine all three dimensions of sustainability by creating new buildings (ecological sustainability) for both 'old' and 'new'<sup>2</sup> inhabitants (social sustainability) and work space for growing industries like the knowledge-intensive industries (economic sustainability).

The urban revitalization strategies have one thing in common: The inner-city districts dispose of a number of protected buildings which have to be integrated in the re-structuring of the quarters. Therefore, these buildings are renovated and combined with new buildings to form an architectural and spatial image of Dublin as a city with a future that is rooted in the city's industrial past. In this sense, the urban regeneration approach even has a notion of architectural and historical sustainability.

## **Introduction**

Urban revitalization strategies imply principles to transform urban areas. These principles are urban planning paradigms as they are subject to planning “fashions” (see Streich, 2005) and thus to social, political, and economic ideologies. Therefore, they can also be labeled as programmatic principles. In

---

2 For the notion of 'old' and 'new' inhabitants, see Norbert Elias and John Scotson (Elias & Scotson, 1994). They differentiate a city's inhabitants in established, i.e. 'old', residents and outsiders, i.e. 'new' residents.

this paper, urban revitalization strategies are conceptualized as constitutive parts of the greater planning strategies applied in a city. Such planning strategies aim at influencing a city's development, either in terms of conservation or transformation. The formulation of certain planning strategies is a reaction to social, political, and economic developments within a society. Although planning paradigms and the connected strategies travel around the world as “traveling concepts” (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005), the planning strategies applied in a special city have concrete characteristics. They can be described as locally specific reactions to – again locally specific – societal phenomena. This paper argues that the sustainability paradigm is currently used for transforming industrial port cities into creative sustainable cities (Müller, 2013). Based on empirical data from the city of Dublin, I show that the sustainability paradigm is combined with the creative city paradigm to revitalize inner-city quarters. This revitalization strategy is part of a greater urban planning strategy. It includes a focus on the creative class (Florida, 2004) and aims at integrating the old in the new, both in architectural and social terms. With this, it tries to be an integrative urban revitalization strategy.

In recent years, creativity as urban planning paradigm has been widely discussed (Florida, 2002, 2005; for a critique see Kunzmann, 2005; e.g. Landry & Bianchini, 1995; Landry, 2008; Peck, 2005; Scott, 2006), and planning strategies to 'create' creative cities have been formulated (Landry,

2006, 2008). Richard Florida as one of the key figures in the debate emphasized the interrelation of what he calls the creative class (Florida, 2004) and a specific geography (Florida, 2005, for an early version of the concept, see 2002). As Florida (2005) argues, the lifestyle of the members of the creative class asks for a set of qualities that a place should possess. These qualities include the technical infrastructure of a place (“technology” in Florida's terminology), a sufficient number of highly educated people (“talent”), and an atmosphere that allows for diverse lifestyles and modes of living (“tolerance”) (e.g. Florida, 2004, p. 244ff.). Florida's theory is appealing to urban planners and politicians alike as it suggests that the qualities of a place can be subject to planning and designing according to these demands. But this assumption is also the point of departure for critique. The criticism can be divided in two substantial groups: First, as the data derive from the US census, the generalization of the findings is questioned (e.g. Hoyman & Faricy, 2009). Second, the ability to plan creative processes, i.e. the 'planability' of the creative 'moment', is denied (e.g. Pratt, 2010).

Despite the critique, Florida's theory is important for urban researchers for two reasons: (1) It takes into account the interrelation of a city and its users in emphasizing that cities are not just places to live – but places to live *a specific form of life*. (2) As the theory was gratefully taken up and applied by city planners worldwide, it had an apparent effect on practical city planning and

thus on cities themselves. Therefore, it is interesting to study the impact of the theory on the material and social structures of cities that themselves are part of a particular society.

To understand Florida's theory and its importance, it is necessary to broaden the focus to include the general development of industrialized Western societies. Such theories include Daniel Bell's (1973) theory of the postindustrial society and Peter F. Drucker's (1993) theory of the post-capitalist society. Taking into account these theories helps to explain why Florida's concepts of the creative class and the creative city are useful tools to analyze contemporary urban phenomena.

### **From Post-Industrial Societies to the *Creative Class***

Florida's theory of the *creative class* is closely connected to conceptualizations of what is called knowledgeable (Lane, 1966), post-industrial (Bell, 1973), or post-capitalist (Drucker, 1993) societies.<sup>3</sup> The theories of post-industrial societies state a considerable increase of professional occupations that deal with information and knowledge. Although all former forms of work – practical, professional, household work – had been in need of knowledge before, what is new in western-industrialized societies in the second half of the

---

3 In the course of this paper, I use the term post-industrial because I want to stress the fact that the theories conceptualize a form of the social that has its roots in an industrial society but that has developed modified forms of work and life. Traces of industrial forms of working and living can still be observed, but the hegemonic paradigm is that of post-industrialism.

20<sup>th</sup> century is the kind of knowledge required. It is not so much implicit, embodied knowledge as it was necessary for agricultural farming or for industrial machine work in factories. It is rather the knowledge and technological skills gained in years of education and training. It is not to be able to make things work, but to have an understanding of *why* and *how* things work – in theory and in practice.

Based on the theories of the post-industrial society, Manuel Castells (1996) stressed the importance of information (e.g. Castells, 1996, p. 204). It is this move that led to the notion of informational society, a term that is now often used synonymously with knowledge society. On the shoulders of these giants (Merton, 1965), Richard Florida published the by now widely received book *The Rise of the Creative Class* in 2002. In this book, he elaborated on what he had worked on before: the growing importance of creativity for people's occupations and lives and the interrelation of place and people (Florida, 2002). Based on statistical data from the US, he stated the emergence of a new social group: the *creative class*. The *creative class* was, according to Florida, characterized by a specific way of life that asked for a certain environment – physically and socially. Florida coined the notion of the 3 *T* that characterizes a successful – i.e. attractive – place: technology, talent, and tolerance. While the first *T* belongs more to the physical and spatial environment, the latter two *T*s belong to what I want to call social

environment. Florida stresses the fact that, according to his data, members of the *creative class* tend to settle where other well educated people live (talent) and where an open atmosphere characterizes social interactions (tolerance). These “creative centers” (Florida, 2005, p. 44) are better able to attract the creative class as new work forces and inhabitants than places possessing only some or none of the *3T*. It is this notion of “creative centers” or “creative cities” that made Florida's theory so appealing to city planners and city officials alike. The theory seemed to promise a fairly easy way to transform cities from “Nerdistans” (Florida, 2005, S. 44) or derelict industrial places to prospering towns and cities, even regions.

A number of studies on the impact of the theory of the *creative class* on urban planning and cities have been published (see for example Atkinson & Easthope, 2009; Bontje & Musterd, 2009; Hospers, 2003; Lange, 2007; Merkel, 2009). They acknowledge that the theories of the creative class and the creative city have entered the fields of urban planning and city branding and study either the local conditions in which they are applied or criticize what is to their mind a lack of empirical basis of Florida's work. I tie my paper to those studies that are based on research on the effects that the emergence of these theories have on actual city planning (e.g. Atkinson & Easthope, 2009; Martí-Costa & Miquel, 2012; Peck, 2012). My focus is on the effects which local city planning strategies have on the built and social environments if the



planning paradigm of creativity is applied. In this context, I understand the theories of the creative class, the creative city, and of creativity as a planning paradigm as “traveling concepts” (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Czarniawska, 2005). This makes it possible to emphasize the local peculiarities of the planning approaches used by connecting them to the global phenomenon of planning cities according to these paradigms.

### **Data and Methods**

To explore the characteristics of creative city planning and its impact on cities, I conducted a case study in Dublin, the capital of the Republic of Ireland. In the course of my empirical research, I applied four different methods of qualitative social research to get five different sets of qualitative data. The methods implied (1) semi-structured interviews with urban planners and members of the creative class, (2) observation as temporary citizen of the cities, (3) photographic documentation, and (4) content analysis of planning documents and archive material respectively. Additionally, I used CENSUS data to describe general economic and social characteristics of the Irish society, with a particular focus on the situation in Dublin.

#### *Qualitative Data & Methods*

(1) Interviews: The interviews were conducted as qualitative, semi-structured expert interviews. I interviewed both city planners working in Dublin and

members of the creative class who lived and worked in Dublin. The interviewees were experts in two senses: On the one hand, and this specifically applied to the city planners, they were experts in their field of work. Working professionally in the field of planning the city, they were experts concerning the city's planning strategies and their implementation and realization. On the other hand, all interviewees were experts in inhabiting the chosen city: Working and living in a city give people a specific perspective on what the city is like, on its physical and spatial form, its atmosphere and on its advantages and shortcomings. This role as experts of city life was interesting to me, too, because it provided additional insights into the city on different levels of society (work, leisure, everyday life, etc.).

(2) Observation: In order to understand the cities' implicit structures, their functioning, and the interrelation of built environment and social interactions, I applied the ethnographic method of observation. I term it *observation as temporary citizen* (Müller, 2012) as it comprises elements of participant and non-participant observation. As *temporary citizen*, I lived in Dublin for nine weeks altogether, adapting a way of using the city and behaving in the city comparable to the locals'. I recorded the impressions and insights gained during the observation in field notes which I later used as complements for other data.

(3) Photographic documentation: Being confronted with a plenitude of visual impressions, I decided for photographic documentation. This form of documentation accompanied my observation as temporary citizen, and the pictures taken served as visual field notes. Later in the course of research, I took advantage of the value of these pictures beyond sheer illustration. I used them as a systematic way to document the city's actual condition and the materialized and thus visible expressions of urban planning. Additionally, based on my observations and the knowledge gained from the interviews and the analysis of the planning documents, I identified central places of transformation and documented them photographically.

(4) Content Analysis: In order to analyze how the planning authorities plan to develop the cities and how they conceptualize the cities' future shape, I collected all planning documents available and applied content analysis to these documents. The documents included planning strategies, documentations of their implementation, revised strategies, and documentations of citizens' objections. Applying content analysis, I analyzed the documents on the basis of my pre-formulated research questions.

I also applied this method to visual archive material which was the fifth set of data. I selected a time frame ranging from 1950 to the 1980s, as these were the times of fundamental industrial and social changes in Dublin. Using the central

places of transformation that I had identified before as starting point for my search, I searched through national and local archives for pictures and picture postcards of these places. Applying Douglas Harper's method of *rephotographing* (Harper, 1988, p. 62), I used pictures of present and past conditions of the same place to visualize transformations. By contrasting the pictures in such a way, constancies and transformations became visually manifest. In addition, the archives provided me with valuable visual information on the past shape and design of the cities.

### *Quantitative Data*

In order to understand general trends in the development of the Irish society, I used CENSUS data from the Central Statistics Office Ireland and from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The data comprised information on the demographic and economic situation in the country and in the city of Dublin in particular as well as on the developments of the situation. In general, the data served as background information to better explain the phenomena observed in the city of Dublin.

### **Case Study Dublin**

The chosen city for collecting empirical data was Dublin, and from 2008-2009, I spent nine weeks there altogether. The city of Dublin is an old port city of approximately 500 000 inhabitants in the city's core and about 1.5 million

people living within the city's boundaries. Dublin is the capital of the Republic of Ireland, a country with a mostly catholic population, a long tradition as agrarian and poor society and a short phase of liberal economic policy in recent years. The climate in Ireland is moderate, but characterized by frequent rainfall,<sup>4</sup> a fact that is important for all questions of city planning and design.<sup>5</sup>

In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Irish society developed from an industrial to a postindustrial, knowledge-based society (cf. Bell, 1973; Drucker, 1993).

In 1973, the Republic of Ireland joined the European Union (EU) and up until 2006, got subsidies of about 39.4 million Euro.<sup>6</sup> During this period, the country underwent substantial changes, both in economic and in social terms. From the 1990s onwards, Ireland experienced an economic boom, finding its expression in the connotation 'Celtic tiger' to describe the state's massive economic growth in analogy to the so-called Asian tigers Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan (see Breathnach, 1998). The consequences for the city of Dublin were an increase in multinational companies like Google, Dell or IBM locating in the Irish capital.

---

4 According to the Irish Meteorological Service Online (MET), there is rainfall on 50% of the days in Ireland's East, see URL: <http://www.met.ie/climate-ireland/rainfall.asp> (March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

5 It is remarkable that Dublin's Inner City is hardly characterized by public outdoor life – apart from crowded streets with (motorized) transport and people making their everyday walks through the city, there are hardly any flâneurs, cafés, or outdoor activities observable.

6 Information and data available on the European Union's website, URL: <http://europa.eu> (March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013).

### *Socio-economic situation in Dublin*

Concerning the situation of labor and employment in Dublin, the distribution of people working in the different sectors has changed in the last decades: In 1970, 48.28% of the workforce was employed in the services sector, in 2007 it was a share of 64.76%.<sup>7</sup> This development was accompanied by a massive decline of people working in the agrarian sector (from 16.89% to 1.66%) and, to a smaller degree, in the industrial sector (from 35.7% to 33.57%). The latter remained comparatively strong and hit a peak during 1998 and 2002 when the numbers oscillated between 40.6% and 42.4%.

A general social and societal effect of the economic growth was a reversal of the migration process: Ireland with its tradition as emigration country now became a country of immigration. In Dublin, the percentage of non-Irish inhabitants grew from 6.2% to 16.7% from 2002 to 2007, with people from Poland being the second-biggest group of immigrants (after those from the United Kingdom). The past decades also had a considerable effect on the level of education of the inhabitants. Today, 30.5% of people aged 25-64 have a university degree, a rate comparable to countries like the Netherlands (30.2%), Sweden (30.5%), and Switzerland (29.9%). Additionally, a continually growing amount of money was invested in research and development (R&D):

---

7 All data taken from the Central Statistics Office Ireland, URL: <http://www.cso.ie> (March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

From 2003 to 2009, the share of spending in the education sector rose from 1.17% to 1.79%. The number of households with access to internet rose as well: From 2000 to 2010, the share of households with internet connection rose from 10.4% to 71.7% in Ireland, with this being among the average of OECD countries. A similar development can be observed for the share of households who have access to a personal computer: In 2000, it was 32.4%, raising to 76.5% in 2010. The numbers for Dublin City are not consistent though: As the share of households with access to a PC rose from 2002 to 2006 (39.1% to 51.8%), the share of households with access to internet sunk in the same time period (30% to 26.8%).<sup>8</sup>

Using Florida's concept of the creative class, the share of the *creative class* in the rate of overall employees in Ireland is 26.01% in 2000 (Florida & Tinagli, 2004, p. 14), with a growth rate of more than 7% since 1995, being the highest rate of all countries analyzed in the study (Florida & Tinagli, 2004, p. 15).

Table 1 and table 2 show a summary of the quantitative data presented above.

---

<sup>8</sup> The data for Dublin are taken from CENSUS of the Central Statistics Office Ireland, URL: <http://census.cso.ie/census> (March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

	<b>Ireland (2006)</b>	<b>Dublin (2006)</b>
<b>inhabitants</b>	4 240 000	506 211
<b>Share of immigrants</b>	14.20%	16.70%
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	4.50%	9.10%
<b>Share of inhabitants with bachelor degree or higher</b>	30.80%	24.90%
<b>Population density</b>	--	4 300 inhab./km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population growth (1991-2011)</b>	--	+23.90%
<b>Employees in service sector</b>	--	64.30%
<b>Growth rate of share of service sector on GDP</b>	5.70%	--
<b>Growth rate of share of industrial sector on GDP</b>	6.20%	--
<b>Growth rate of share of agrarian sector on GDP</b>	-10,60%	--
<b>Rate of households with internet access</b>	50%	26.80%

*Table 1: Socio-economic data for Ireland and Dublin, 2006*

<b>Unemployment rate</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2006</b>
	13.7% (Ireland, no data available for Dublin)	9.2%	9.1%
<b>Share of employees in services sector</b>	<b>1970</b>		<b>2007</b>
	48.28%		64.76%
<b>Share of creative class</b>	<b>2000</b>		<b>2006</b>
	26.01% (Ireland, no data available for Dublin)		Dublin, share of creative industries: 10%

*Table 2: Development of workforce over time*



As the data show, Ireland's development was a success story until 2008. The financial crisis, hitting its preliminary peak in 2008,<sup>9</sup> had major consequences for Ireland and Dublin. The gross domestic product (GDP) decreased in 2008 and 2009 while at the same time the national unemployment rate increased up to 13.7% in 2010, the highest rate since 1994. In 2007, i.e. just before the crisis' peak, the unemployment rate in Ireland had only been 4.6%. The data of Dublin show higher numbers than the country's average, but the development as such is the same. According to this data, we have to talk about a Celtic tiger being in poor health.<sup>10</sup>

An observation can be made that adds a qualitative dimension to the quantitative data presented: The city of Dublin was and still is confronted with the situation that a considerable number of people participating in the economic and social boom faces a notable number of people who cannot participate in the city's and the country's (economic) growth. Observing city life in Dublin thus means to see numerous, often homeless, people begging in the streets, literally opposite rich people.

### *Socio-geographic characteristics of Dublin*

Dublin is located at Ireland's East coast at the Irish Sea, close to the St. George

---

9 See IMF Summary Data, URL: <http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/imfsummarydatapage> (March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

10 My inquiry period ended in fall 2009 so that I cannot give any statements on the actual Irish development. Nonetheless, according to media news, Ireland is the one of all PIIGS' countries (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain) that recovers best.

canal, the water route to Great Britain. This makes Dublin being an important port and trading city. Traditionally, trading with overseas and European markets played an important role for both the country's and the city's economy and job market. Today, the port is, based on freight, economic importance, and the number of passengers cleared, Ireland's most important port (Bennett, 2005, p. 80). But the port and its physical environment has also undergone major changes: As it continued to grow, it was moved out of the inner city, where it was formerly located, and closer towards the seaside, leaving the former dockyards empty. Thus, the former port area is now one of the central areas of transformation in Dublin.

With an inner city area of approximately 117 km<sup>2</sup>, Dublin is quite densely populated (4300 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>). In 2006, 27.99% of the Irish population lived in the greater Dublin area, with 11.93% of the Irish population living in Dublin City.<sup>11</sup>

The river *Liffey* runs through the city in East-West-direction, dividing Dublin in a Northern and a Southern part, not only in geographic, but also in social terms. The attributions of the “poorer” Northern part and the “richer” Southern part have historic origins, and they have dug themselves in the collective memory of Dublin's inhabitants. Although the socio-economic reason for this

---

<sup>11</sup> Data taken from the Central Statistics Office Ireland, URL: <http://cso.ie> (March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013).

attribution is vanishing today, it has concrete physical and social effects: Both parts of the city have their own city centers, and the division influences the everyday practices of the inhabitants, as an interviewee describes:

That's the big thing, it's the North and South. I don't tend to cross the Liffey too much, from time to time we might have a client over there, but [...] I would never go there [to the North, ALM] to shop or have a coffee or go for a drink, no, and the only reason that would bring me over there would be business or something very specific, but otherwise, no, I don't ever cross the Liffey ((laughing)). I'm a Southsider, [...] So I'll always stick to the South [...] for us it's like the North is the scarier place y'know, for them, they'll probably say we are, y'know, it's just where you happen to be born and that so, I'm just a Southsider and don't tend to go across the Liffey y'know (CCD1, Abs. 171-182).

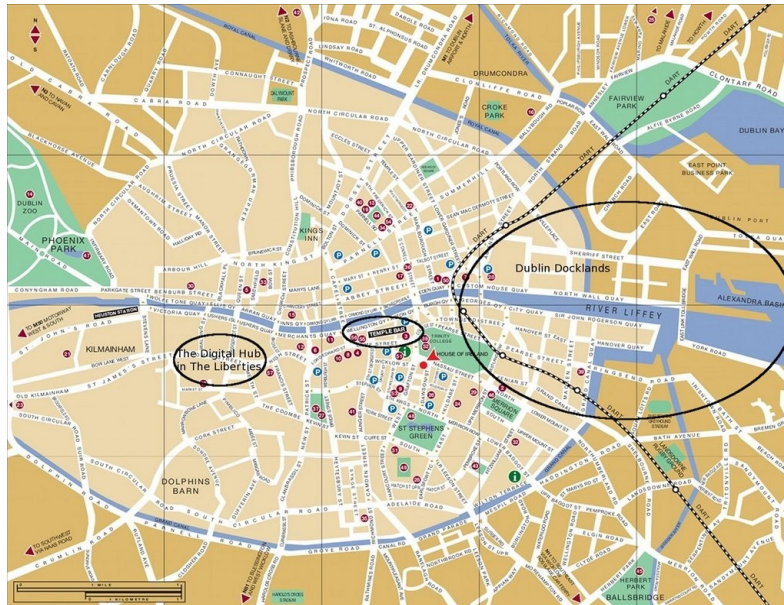
A planning official in Dublin describes the role of the river for the local communities and the resultant challenges for the planning authorities as follows:

[Communities] north and south of the Liffey [feel] that they are, you know, very distinct and different. [...] So the river's a huge thing and, y'know, traditionally in Dublin the city [...] kinda turned it's back on the river, y'know. It's a very Irish thing, the river was a functional thing, not an amenity, so that's what we're working to address. (DDDA1, Abs. 1; 15)

Next to the North-South division caused by the river, the inner city of Dublin has several distinct quarters that form the city in a prominent way. In this paper, I focus on three main inner city quarters: *The Liberties*, *Temple Bar*, and the *Docklands*.<sup>12</sup> The former two are located south of the *Liffey*, the latter stretches across the river. Map 1 shows their location in the city of Dublin.

---

12 For a detailed description of these quarters, see Müller (2013).



Map 1: Location of selected quarters in Dublin, Ireland © google maps

### *City Planning in Dublin*

In Dublin, several institutions are responsible for the local city planning strategies and their realization. The *Dublin City Council* and the *Dublin City Development Board* are the most prominent, being responsible for the planning on a city-wide level. The former is the democratically elected administration body of the city and the editor of the *Dublin City Development Plan*, which is valid for a period of six years. The latter is an institution that is explicitly designated for aspects of city development. Its members are representatives of the local government, and legal and social institutions. It is subordinated to the *Dublin City Council* and formulates the programmatic urban development strategy. This strategy is, in contrast to the city development plan, valid for ten

years. Additionally, there are several so-called *Area Action Plans*, formulated by the *Dublin City Council*, that comprise of detailed planning strategies for selected parts of the city. These areas can, but do not have to be identical to the administrative quarters of the city.

The quarters of Dublin also have district administration bodies. These do not only address aspects of urban development, but also the identification of the quarters' inhabitants with the respective area, e.g. by encouraging them for participation in community life.

As I selected three quarters in this paper, the institutions in charge of the district planning are: *The Dublin Docklands Development Authority*, *The Digital Hub Development Agency*, and the *Temple Bar Cultural Trust*. The role of the latter differs to the other institutions as it focuses mainly on aspects of arts and culture and not so much on planning and designing the physical environment.

In all three cases, there is a direct connection to the (party politically organized) *Dublin City Council* that delegates members to each of these institutions. Thus, it can, at least indirectly, influence the institutions' work.

After this presentation of the methods used, the data on which I base my findings, and the case study Dublin, I am now going to present selected results of my research on the characteristics of urban planning by using the planning

paradigm of creativity.

## **Findings**

Analyzing the way in which the creativity paradigm is used in Dublin's city planning strategies, we find that the understanding of creativity is twofold. Creativity is understood as (1) an aesthetic-cultural and as (2) a technological-innovative way of creating (material and immaterial) objects. The two understandings of creativity, conceptualized as ideal types (see Weber, 1985), represent two poles of a continuum. The understanding of creativity on the city level is broad and unspecific, but on the district level, the understanding of creativity employed is substantiated and differs depending on the district and the strategies used.

The second finding is that creativity is combined with a second urban planning paradigm: sustainability. By using this paradigm in a threefold way – as economic, ecological, and social sustainability –, it is possible to apply it for a variety of planning strategies. Thus, it is used for very different strategies in very different districts.

Therefore, the two planning paradigms are comparable in the ways they are used. Additionally, combining them enables the planning authorities to realize a more inclusive planning strategy.

In the next sections, I am going to describe the planning strategies and their

impacts on the physical and social environments of the city. I exemplify this by three selected districts: *The Liberties*, *Temple Bar*, and the *Docklands*.

#### *The Liberties*: Technological creativity and sustainability

The inner-city quarter *The Liberties* is home of a new-build technology cluster, *The Digital Hub*. The cluster's objective is to attract and to host a variety of small, medium-sized, and big companies from the field of IT- and digital technology. In the buildings of the former *Guinness* brewery, a protected building, office spaces are created that can be rented for varying periods of time. Here, creativity is understood by planners and workers alike as technological-innovative way of problem solving and producing objects. Additionally, the representatives of the planning authority in charge, the *Digital Hub Development Authority*, emphasize the sustainable characteristic of their planning approach:

C: the campus of the Digital Hub that is fundamentally connected to a very dynamic, very inspirational local community, is a much more **sustainable campus** [...] and to do a number of things that are connected together, and because our thoughts are that it's the connection of these individual things together, that will create the dynamic environment that will be attractive to industry, that will be inspirational to research, and that will connect a community, in such a way as to create some sort of **sustainable future for all**. [...] B: there is a premise that the Digital Hub will be **economically sustainable** (DDH2, Abs. 555-703, emphasis by author).

The creation of a technology cluster is put in context with the community living in the district. It is anticipated that the cluster will have an effect on the local community in *The Liberties* by focusing on the economic development of

the area. In this case, economic sustainability is combined with a technological-innovative understanding of creativity.

Fostering the economic development by attracting IT enterprises to open a new field of work for employees is only one aspect of the planning strategies. Looking closer at the strategies applied, we see that the ecological dimension of sustainability is also present: Old buildings like the former *Guinness* brewery are used for new work spaces. The conversion of existing buildings and “infrastructure”, as an interviewee puts it, is a way to create new spaces<sup>13</sup> of work:

“we’re certainly **taking advantage of the infrastructure that’s here already**, [...] the other thing I would say is that there is certainly some innovation in terms of the way those buildings are being used, and the way they’re designed to be used [...] because certainly, as an agency, we’re striking a balance between trying to create economically viable infrastructure, and infrastructure that tries to facilitate the clustering and the collaboration that needs to go on” (DDH2, Abs. 671-681, emphasis by author).

With this, the planners acknowledge the urban environment that is already existent and use it as basis for their future-oriented planning strategies that aim at creating a cluster of people working in the technology sector. The physical environment is thus combined with the socio-economic environment. Additionally, understanding *The Digital Hub* as part of the creative city strategy and interpreting its creating as a sustainable urban planning strategy is a way to (rhetorically) connect the creativity paradigm with the sustainability

---

<sup>13</sup> I use the concept of space developed by Martina Löw (2001), stressing the fact that people constitute spaces, among other things, on the basis of surrounding objects.



paradigm. Finally, the planners understand the technology cluster as a means to transform the area in a sustainable way – sustainable in three respects:

“the goal is to create [...] an enterprise cluster [...] that in fact will have a significant economic impact here, and that will actually **help to drive the regeneration of this area [...], socially [...], economically and physically**” (DDH2, Abs. 60ff., emphasis by author).

To sum up, we can say that *The Liberties* is a district in Dublin where the creativity paradigm is applied to create a technology cluster, thus understanding creativity in a technologically-innovative sense. Creativity is then combined with sustainability as planning paradigm that serves as basis for an integrative development strategy. With this, the technology cluster is conceptualized as a means to transform the area economically, ecologically, and socially.

#### *Temple Bar: Cultural Creativity and Sustainability*

In *Temple Bar*, Dublin's cultural quarter, the emphasis is on a socially sustainable approach that is combined with an understanding of creativity in an aesthetic-cultural sense. Using Temple Bar's history as Dublin's cultural quarter, the planning strategies have a strong notion of conservation. Different to *The Digital Hub* with its re-use of the *Guinness* brewery, the buildings in *Temple Bar* are taken as symbols of a past that has to be conserved both physically and substantially. Therefore, the planning authority supports artists

and cultural initiatives in the quarter in terms of infrastructure and financial assistance. With this, they target at preserving the quarter's image as cultural quarter. Additionally, their strategy has a socially sustainable dimension as the structural support by the planning authority makes it possible for artists and cultural initiatives to use a certain infrastructure to affordable conditions.

To sum up, *Temple Bar* is an example for an urban planning strategy that combines cultural creativity with social sustainability and thus represents a second facet of planning a “creative sustainable city” (DCC2, Abs. 69). I now turn to the third example, the *Dublin Docklands*, which can be characterized as a quarter where the two paradigms creativity and sustainability are applied with all their different dimensions.

#### *The Docklands: Combining Aesthetics with Technology*

In the *Docklands*, the area of the old inner-city port, an attempt is made to combine all three dimensions of sustainability with the two dimensions of the planning paradigm of creativity. The area serves as flagship for Dublin's transformation process. As the port's original designation is no longer valid, the planning authorities' concepts comprise a mixed-use in the area. The planning objectives here are transforming the Docklands to a place for working, spending leisure time, and living. Industrial occupations are replaced by enterprises of *creative class* occupations like Google, an IT enterprise, or

McCannFitzgerald, a law firm. The *Docklands* as living place are designed for different life styles, trying to allow for the fact that the ways how people want to live changed during the past decades. This implies creating flats of different sizes and with varying infrastructure, e.g. for families, single-person or 2-persons households, the elderly etc.

This approach is explicitly expressed by the Dublin City Council when they formulate the planning objective as to achieve a “sustainable social and economic regeneration of area” (Dublin City Council, 2005, p. 9). This also includes the re-use of existing infrastructure like the general structure of the *Docklands*. Comparable to the strategies employed in *The Liberties*, but on a larger scale, the re-use of the existing physical environment is also a means of transforming the *Docklands* in an ecologically sustainable way.

By re-designing public spaces in the *Docklands* and adding new cultural places to the area, the aesthetic-cultural dimension of creativity is explicitly used in the planning strategies. Thus, all notions of the planning paradigms, creativity and sustainability, can be found in the planning paradigms used in the *Docklands*.

## **Conclusion and Discussion**

The urban revitalization strategies presented above have one thing in common: In all cases, creativity and sustainability are used as planning paradigms and

are combined with each other to allow for a more integrative planning strategy. An important characteristic of this particular planning approach is the re-use of (protected) buildings. In general, old buildings, serving as symbols for the city's industrial past, are renovated and combined with new buildings to form an architectural and spatial image of Dublin as a city with a future that is rooted in an industrial past. In the case that the buildings are protected, like the *Guinness* brewery in *The Liberties*, this is due to legal reasons: The buildings have inevitably to be integrated in the re-structuring of the quarters. In other cases, the decision to re-use existing buildings is rooted in a sustainable planning approach: It is economically sustainable to use existing infrastructure, it is ecologically sustainable not to use additional construction material, and it is socially sustainable to offer people a symbolic and physical identification with the city's past.

The districts analyzed comprise of strong local communities that react potentially reluctant to revitalization strategies performed by the local planning authorities. Thus, a socially sustainable development strategy is necessary. Re-using the existing physical environment and adding a new meaning to buildings – e.g. by transforming the industrial work place brewery to a work place for the new economy – is a way to respect the local residents and their emotional bond with the area and attracting new inhabitants to a

place at the same time.<sup>14</sup> By adding a new usage of the built environment, the planners attempt to tie the planning of the new to a grown identity of Dublin as port city – the working port of industrial times becomes a working port of post-industrial times, adding a usage as living port (see exemplarily Warsewa, 2010). In this sense, the planning strategies have (1) a socially sustainable dimension because they acknowledge the people's emotionally laden bond to the city's port area. They have (2) a physically sustainable dimension because they respect the value of the built environment. Therefore, the urban regeneration approach even has a notion of architectural and historical sustainability.

To sum up, by creating new buildings (ecological sustainability) for both 'old' and 'new' inhabitants (social sustainability) and work space for growing industries like the knowledge-intensive industries (economic sustainability), the planning strategies in Dublin address all three dimension of sustainability.

The importance of this planning paradigm is formulated by the *City Council*:

“This development plan sets out a new approach to meet the needs and aspirations of the citizens of Dublin and the country in the long term. This approach is based on the principles of sustainability” (Dublin City Council 2011, 6, emphasis by author).

The – economically sustainable – strategy to foster occupations in the field of

---

14 For an explanation why social conflicts between residents and newcomers often emerge in a given area, see Norbert Elias and John Scotson (1994). They differentiate a city's inhabitants in established, i.e. 'old', residents and outsiders, i.e. 'new' residents. As both groups have different sets of norms and values, conflicts are often inevitable.

the creative industries or, more broadly, of the *creative class* is also a means to realize the creative city paradigm. Thus, creativity and sustainability as planning paradigms have an intersection – in terms of planning strategies. This culminates in the expression of a planning official:

„Our vision at the moment is to have a creative sustainable city.“ (DCC2, Abs. 69)

### **Acronyms of interviews**

CCD1: interview with a representative of the *creative class*, Dublin

DCC2: interview with a representative of the *Dublin City Council*, Dublin

DDDA1: interview with a representative of the *Dublin Docklands*

*Development Authority*, Dublin

DDH2: interview with a representative of the *Digital Hub Development*

*Agency*, Dublin

## Bibliographical Notes

- Atkinson, R., & Easthope, H. (2009). The Consequences of the Creative Class: The Pursuit of Creativity Strategies in Australia's Cities. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(1), 64–79.
- Bell, D. (1973). *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society. A Venture in Social Forecast*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bennett, D. (2005). *The Encyclopaedia of Dublin*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.
- Bontje, M., & Musterd, S. (2009). Creative industries, creative class and competitiveness: Expert opinions critically appraised. *Geoforum*, 40(5), 843–852.
- Breathnach, P. (1998). Exploring the „Celtic Tiger“ Phenomenon: Causes and Consequences of Ireland's Economic Miracle. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 5(4), 305–316.
- Castells, M. (1996). *The Rise of the Network Society: Economy, Society and Culture: Rise of the Network Society Vol 1*. Massachusetts, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Czarniawska (ed.). (2005). *Global Ideas: How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy*. Malmö: Copenhagen Business School.
- Czarniawska, B., & Joerges, B. (1996). Travels of Ideas. In *Translating Organizational Change* (pp. 13–48). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Czarniawska, B., & Sevón, G. (2005). Translation is a Vehicle, Imitation its Motor, and Fashion Sits at the Wheel. In *Global Ideas. How Ideas*,



- Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy* (pp. 7–12).  
Malmö: Liber & Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Drucker, P. F. (1993). *Post-Capitalist Society*. New York: Harper Business.
- Dublin City Council. (2005). *Dublin City Development Plan 2005-2011*.  
*Volume 1 - Written Statement*. Dublin: Dublin City Council.
- Elias, N., & Scotson, J. L. (1994). *The Established and the Outsiders*. London  
et al.: Sage.
- Florida, R. (2002). The Economic Geography of Talent. *Annals of the  
Association of American Geographers*, 92(4), 743–755.
- Florida, R. (2004). *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming  
Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Florida, R. (2005). *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York, London:  
Routledge.
- Florida, R., & Tinagli, I. (2004, Februar 17). Europe in the Creative Age.  
Available on URL:  
<http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/creativeeurope>
- Harper, D. (1988). Visual Sociology: Expanding Sociological Vision. *The  
American Sociologist*, 54–70.
- Hospers, G.-J. (2003). Creative cities: Breeding places in the knowledge  
economy. *Knowledge, Technology, and Policy*, 16(3), 143–162.  
doi:10.1007/s12130-003-1037-1
- Hoyman, M., & Faricy, C. (2009). It Takes a Village. *Urban Affairs Review*,

44(3), 311–333.

Kunzmann, K. R. (2005). Creativity in Planning: A Fuzzy Concept? *disP*, 162(3), 5–13.

Landry, C. (2006). *The Art of City Making*. London, Sterling/VA: Earthscan.

Landry, C. (2008). *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (2. ed.). London: Earthscan.

Landry, C., & Bianchini, F. (1995). *The Creative City*. Demos.

Lane, R. E. (1966). The Decline of Politics and Ideology in a Knowledgeable Society. *American Sociological Review*, 31(5), 649–662.

Lange, B. (2007). *Die Räume der Kreativszenen: Culturepreneurs und ihre Orte in Berlin*. Bielefeld: transcript.

Löw, M. (2001). *Raumsoziologie*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

Martí-Costa, M., & Miquel, M. P. i. (2012). The knowledge city against urban creativity? Artists' workshops and urban regeneration in Barcelona. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 19(1), 92–108.

Merkel, J. (2009). *Kreativquartiere: Urbane Milieus zwischen Inspiration und Prekarität*. Berlin: Edition Sigma.

Merton, R. K. (1965). *On the Shoulders of Giants: a Shandean Postscript: The Post-Italianate Edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Müller, A.-L. (2012). Sozialität und Materialität der Creative Cities: Die Effekte der Planung kreativer Städte am Beispiel Dublin und Göteborg. In H.-G. Soeffner (ed.), *Transnationale Vergesellschaftungen*.

*Verhandlungen des 35. Kongresses der Deutschen Gesellschaft für  
Soziologie in Frankfurt am Main 2010.* Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Müller, A.-L. (2013). *Green Creative City*. Konstanz: UVK.

Peck, J. (2005). Struggling with the Creative Class. *International Journal of  
Urban & Regional Research*, 29(4), 740–770.

Peck, J. (2012). Recreative City: Amsterdam, Vehicular Ideas and the Adaptive  
Spaces of Creativity Policy. *International Journal of Urban and  
Regional Research*, 36(3), 462–485. doi:10.1111/j.1468-  
2427.2011.01071.x

Pratt, A. C. (2010). Creative cities: Tensions within and between social,  
cultural and economic development: A critical reading of the UK  
experience. *City, Culture and Society*, 1(1), 13–20.  
doi:10.1016/j.ccs.2010.04.001

Scott, A. J. (2006). Creative Cities: Conceptual Issues and Policy Questions.  
*Journal of Urban Affairs*, 28, 1–17.

Streich, B. (2005). *Stadtplanung in der Wissensgesellschaft: Ein Handbuch*.  
Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Warszewa, G. (2010). Lokale Kultur und die Neuerfindung der Hafenstadt.  
*Raumforschung und Raumordnung*, 68(5), 373–387.  
doi:10.1007/s13147-010-0053-3

Weber, M. (1985). *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*. (Johannes  
Winckelmann, ed.) (6<sup>th</sup> revised ed.). Tübingen: Mohr.